NORTHERN PERSPECTIVES

NORTHERN ALBERTA INTO THE '90s

Pre-Conference Report

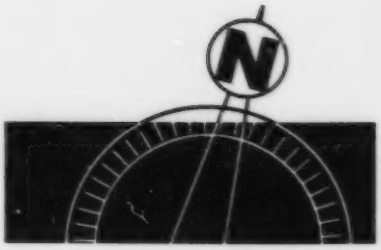
November 21 - 23, 1990
Grande Prairie, Alberta

91-02252/

Northern Perspectives
Pre-Conference Report

Prepared for:
Northern Alberta Development Council

Prepared by:
Scott & Fenrich Consultants Incorporated
in conjunction with the Northern Development Branch



October 1990

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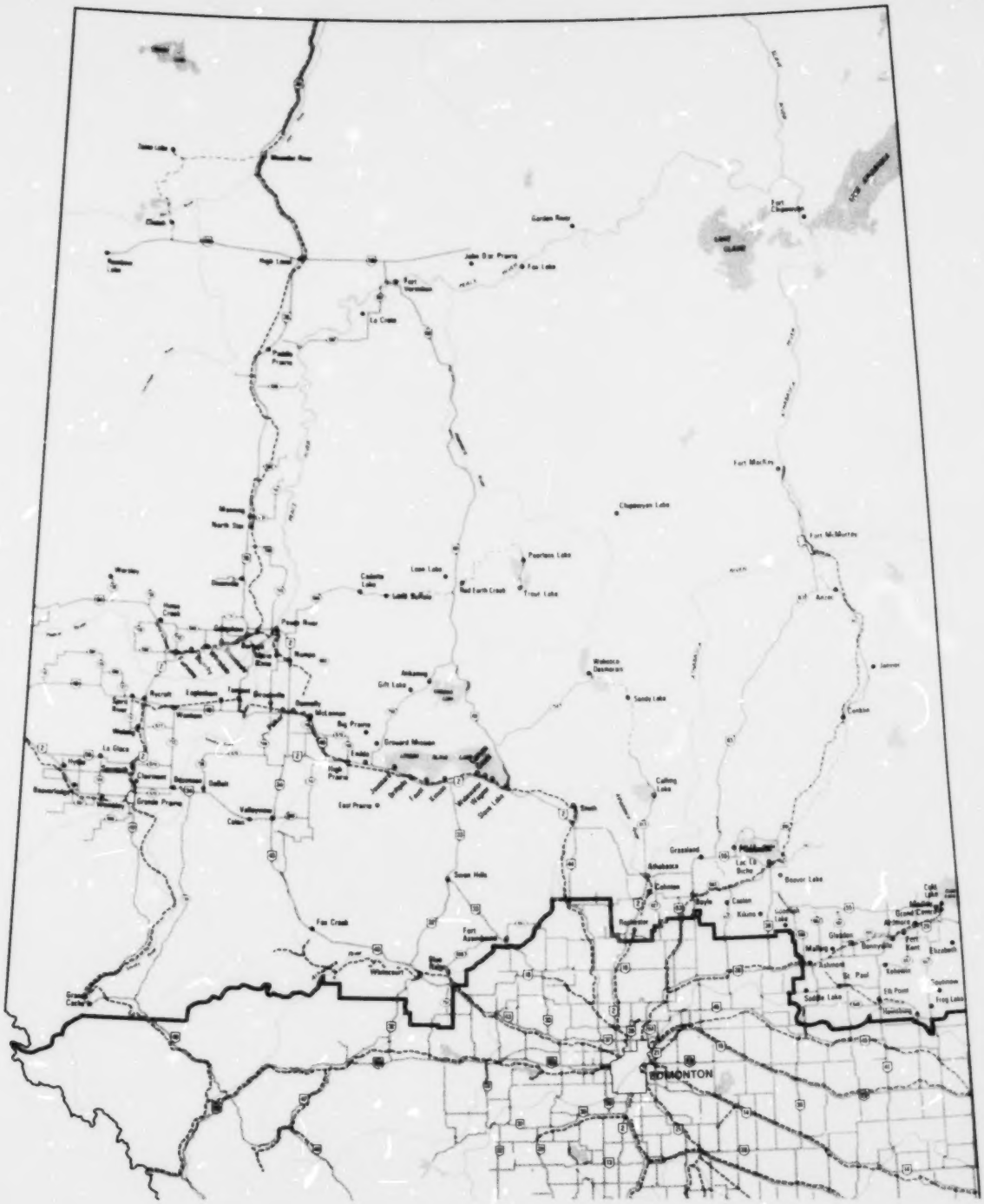

NORTHERN ALBERTA DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL AREA

COMMUNITIES WITH POPULATION OVER 75 (1981 CANADA CENSUS)

PRIMARY HIGHWAY — SECONDARY ROAD — L.O.C. ROAD — RAILWAY

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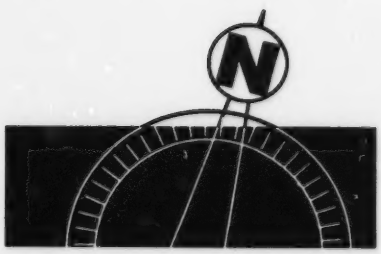
Report Overview

The primary function of the Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC) is to provide government with a northern perspective on a wide range of development issues. In keeping with this role, the NADC periodically sponsors major conferences on northern development. The 1990 conference will be held in Grande Prairie on November 21-23. Entitled "Northern Perspectives: Northern Alberta into the '90s," the conference will bring together approximately 300 northerners to discuss what balanced development means in the 1990s.

This report is intended to stimulate discussion at the conference as well as determine the views of northerners on emerging development concerns. The report focuses on three key areas: (1) human services, (2) economic development and (3) the environment. Two approaches were used to collect information on each of these areas:

- a statistical review of public submissions received by the NADC during the 1980s
- a survey of community leaders from across the north conducted during the summer of 1990.

The principal findings from the research are located in the "Study Findings" section of the report. Additional information on specific topic areas (e.g., health care, forestry, waste management) can be found in the "Topic Summaries" section. A copy of the survey is located under "Survey Form".



Introduction

Background

The Northern Alberta Development Council periodically sponsors conferences that provide northerners with an opportunity to interact with representatives of government and industry. Most of the conferences are designed to stimulate action on specific issues (e.g., water management, alcohol and drug abuse, infrastructure development). Larger, multi-issue conferences, such as the Northern Perspectives Conference, are mounted every five years. These conferences are generally geared toward promoting balanced development in the north.

The Northern Perspectives Conference will be held in Grande Prairie on November 21-23, 1990 and will discuss what balanced northern development means in the 1990s. The conference goal is to help the NADC prepare a set of principles and recommendations capable of balancing environmental, economic and social development objectives. The conference will feature a series of panel discussions and workshops which will give delegates new insights to northern development, while providing ample opportunity for feedback and discussion.

Study Scope and Purpose

This research report is intended to serve as a basis for discussions at the conference. The purpose of the report is two-fold:

- to highlight key development issues to be addressed by delegates attending the Northern Perspectives Conference
- to identify major challenges facing northern Alberta in the '90s.

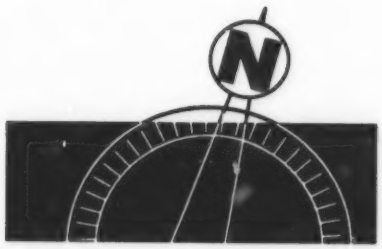
In this study, northern Alberta is defined as the 60% of the province located within the NADC administrative boundary (see map).

Research into development issues facing the north was restricted to three areas:

- Human Services
- Economic Development
- Environment.

Infrastructure is not explicitly dealt with in this study. Infrastructure issues are, however, part of each of the above categories.

Approach to Research



Two principal sources of information were used in preparing this report. A review of briefs presented to the NADC during the 1980s was used to provide a historical context for discussing current development issues. This information was supplemented by the findings from the Northern Perspectives Survey conducted during the summer of 1990. The survey addressed what community leaders see as the key development priorities facing the north. Survey results were compiled and coded by Market Trends of Vancouver under the direction of Scott & Fenrich Consultants Incorporated of Edmonton. The analysis of NADC briefs was carried out by staff of the Northern Development Branch in Peace River.

Research Results

There are two types of research results in this report. Information dealing with the percentage of NADC briefs for a particular topic area is usually shown in a pie chart. These percentages will add to 100%. On the other hand, percentages based on the number of times a specific issue or concern occurs, either in the NADC briefs or Northern Perspectives Survey, can exceed 100%. This is because individual briefs or responses may address more than one issue. These results are shown in the form of a bar graph or bracketed percentages.

Report Organization

Part 1 of this report summarizes key findings from the analysis of NADC briefs as well as the Northern Perspectives Survey. More detailed information on specific topic areas is provided in Topic Summaries. A copy of the survey questionnaire is provided under Survey Form.

Northern Alberta in the '80s

People and Communities

Northern Alberta is characterized by a diversity of community types. It includes:

2 cities

3 counties

26 towns

10 improvement districts

14 villages

24 Indian bands

5 municipal districts

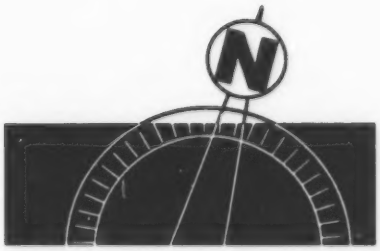
8 Metis settlements.

In 1986, a total of 242,000 people were recorded as living north of the NADC boundary. This represents 10% of Alberta's population. One quarter of the north's population lives in the two cities of Fort McMurray and Grande Prairie. Another 32% live in the 26 towns while the remaining 42% live in rural communities.

The total population of northern municipalities increased by 15% between 1980 and 1988. This is 3% higher than the percentage increase for the province as a whole. Within the north, the two cities of Grande Prairie and Fort McMurray had a combined population increase of 22%. By contrast, northern towns grew by an average of 15%. The population increase for smaller communities and rural municipalities was the same as the provincial average (12%).

On average, the population of the north tends to be younger than the rest of Alberta. For example, in 1986 people under the age of 45 comprised 82% of the northern population. By contrast, people within this age group comprised 75% of the total Alberta population. Much of this difference is due to the lower percentage of northerners over the age of 55 and the higher percentage below the age of 19.

The people of northern Alberta are of diverse ethnic origin. Those of western European extraction comprise two-thirds of the population. Of these, the majority are of British descent followed by German and French. Notable populations of Ukrainians, Croatians and Mennonites also exist in the north.



Approximately 33,000 people of aboriginal ancestry, including status and non-status Indians and Metis, live in northern Alberta. This represents roughly 13% of the total northern population. The majority of northern natives are of Cree ancestry, with smaller numbers of Chipewyan, Dene Tha' and Beaver.

Overall, the people of the north have become increasingly better educated. Between 1976 and 1986 there were:

- 10,000 fewer people with less than a Grade 9 education
- 50% more people with post-secondary degrees
- 245% more people attending northern advanced education institutions.

Resources and Economy

The north has significant economic advantages in its resource sectors. Highlights include:

Energy

- 100% of Alberta's oil sands production
- 19 major oil fields producing 35% of Alberta's crude.

Agriculture

- 21% of Alberta's farms
- 31% of Alberta's oilseed production
- 24% of Alberta's coarse grain production
- world's largest northern farming region.

Forestry

- 86% of Alberta's forests
- 88% of Alberta's annual timber harvest (1987/88)
- current expansion in pulp and paper production with new mills constructed or under construction in Slave Lake, Whitecourt and Peace River.

Tourism

- 19% of Alberta's estimated tourist visitations (1988)
- development potential based on rivers, wilderness, international routes, parks and heritages.

Commercial Fishing and Hunting

- 74% of Alberta's total commercial catch
- 90% of Alberta's annual harvest of fur-bearing animals.

Other economic activities such as retail trade, business services and value-added processing offer significant development opportunities.

The north's labor force is reflective of the opportunities which arise from its natural resource base. Eighteen percent of Alberta's primary workforce in 1986 was located within the NADC administrative boundary. Conversely, northerners comprised only 6% of the province's workforce in manufacturing, finance, insurance and real estate.

Development Issues

Despite its strong resource base, northern Alberta is faced with important development challenges. Examples include:

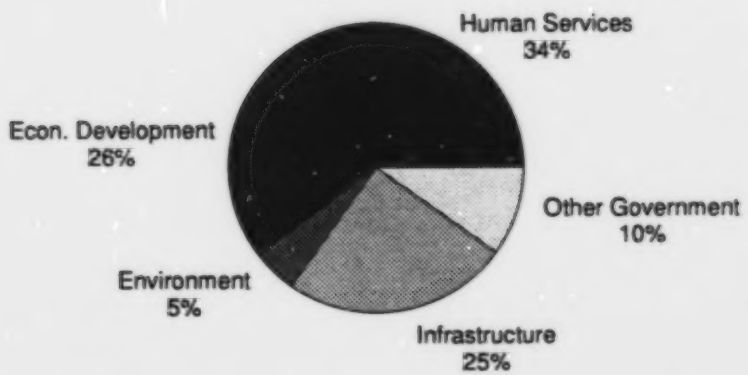
- Many remote communities, particularly native ones, have been largely bypassed by development and experience socio-economic conditions well below the provincial average.
- As a resource economy, northern Alberta is particularly vulnerable to recurrent booms and slumps in the demand for its products.
- The climate and distances encountered in the north impose physical difficulties for economic and social development.

NADC Briefs

The Northern Alberta Development Council was established in 1963 as a five-member advisory council for government. Ten years later, the size of the Council was doubled to 10 members through the Northern Alberta Development Act. The Act gave the NADC the responsibility to "investigate, monitor, evaluate, plan and promote practical measures to foster and advance general development in northern Alberta and to advise the government thereon..."

The principal means by which the NADC fulfils its mandate is by acting on briefs it receives at the six public meetings it holds each year. These briefs serve to identify emerging development issues in the north. During the 1980s, the NADC heard a total of 2116 briefs from northerners, on a wide range of topics. Sixty-five percent of these briefs fell into three key categories: (1) human services, (2) economic development, and (3) the environment. The remainder dealt with either infrastructure (25%) or other matters such as taxation and community planning (10%). The following chart provides a breakdown of briefs by subject category. An overview of three development areas reviewed in this report is provided below.

Figure 1
NADC Briefs by Subject Category
(1980-1989)

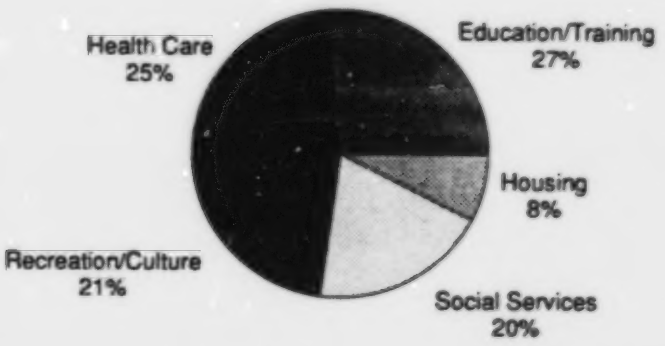


Total Briefs = 2116

Human Services Briefs

Seven hundred and nineteen briefs were presented to the NADC during the 1980s dealing with issues related to human services. This represents 34% of the total number of briefs received by Council. These briefs can be further subdivided into five main topic areas: (1) education and training, (2) health care, (3) social services, (4) recreation and culture, and (5) housing. The following chart shows a proportional breakdown of human services by topic area.

Figure 2
Human Services Briefs by Topic Area
(1980-1989)



Total Briefs = 719

Most human services briefs dealt with the following issues or concerns:

- development and/or maintenance of facilities (37%)
- financing of programs, facilities or services (36%)
- development and/or delivery of human service programs or services (27%)
- provision of services, programs or facilities in native communities (21%)
- recruitment and retention of professional personnel (12%).

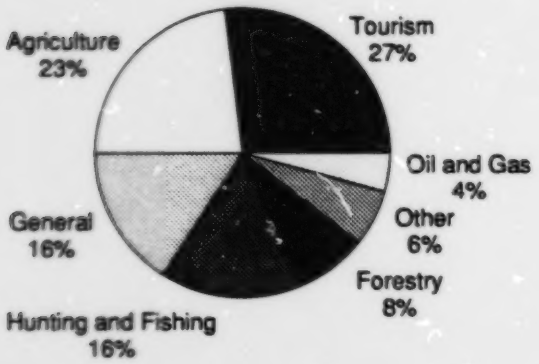
Economic Development Briefs

Five hundred and fifty-four briefs dealing with economic development were presented to the NADC during the 1980s. This represents 26% of the total number of briefs received by Council. As shown in Figure 3, just over two-thirds dealt with topics related to agriculture, tourism and commercial hunting and fishing.

The majority of economic development briefs dealt with the following issues or concerns:

- financial support for development projects or industries (34%)
- support for development of a specific industry or project (34%)
- economic development in native communities (17%)
- development of public or private facilities required by local business (16%)
- research into the feasibility or needs of a specific project or industry (11%).

Figure 3
Economic Development Briefs by Topic Area (1980 -1989)



Total Briefs = 554

Environment Briefs

The NADC periodically receives briefs dealing with environmental issues. During the 1980s, 105 briefs were presented to Council on issues ranging from soil conservation to habitat preservation. The following list provides a breakdown of environment briefs in terms of content:

- concerns related to water management including drainage and erosion, water diversions and flood control (31%)
- concerns about the pollution of rivers, lakes and aquifers (27%)
- concerns related to environmental planning and management (e.g., integrated resource plans, environmental impact assessment) (20%)
- concerns related to the disposal and treatment of solid wastes including hazardous wastes (10%)
- concerns over preservation and protection of wildlife and wildlife habitat (7%).

In absolute terms, the above information is somewhat misleading. Many of the economic development briefs have strong environmental management implications. This is particularly the case for briefs dealing with commercial hunting and fishing and forestry. Similarly, many infrastructure briefs such as those pertaining to water and sewage have an important environmental component.

Northern Alberta Today

Northern Perspectives Survey

The Northern Perspectives Survey provides insights into the current attitudes of community leaders on northern development issues. The survey expands on the concerns of northerners as expressed to the NADC during the 1980s. A total of 247 surveys were mailed out during the summer of 1990 to members of the following groups:

- mayors of northern cities, towns and villages
- reeves of municipal districts and counties
- chairpersons of school districts, health districts, improvement districts, and community futures committees
- chiefs of native reserves and chairpersons of metis settlements
- leaders of environment groups based in the north
- past and current members of the NADC
- chamber of commerce presidents
- northern MLAs and MPs.

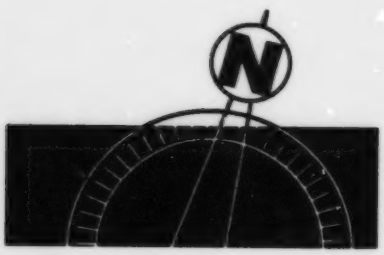
A total of 115 surveys were received before the August 31 deadline. Members of each of the above groups were represented in the respondent population. For purposes of confidentiality, it is not possible to provide a statistical breakdown of respondents by group.

This section of the report summarizes the results of the survey according to:

- the likes and dislikes of survey respondents about living in the north
- the priorities and concerns of respondents in the areas of human services, economic development and the environment
- the level of confidence of survey respondents that their development priorities or concerns will be addressed within the next five years.

Greater detail on responses for the main topic areas identified in the survey is provided in the Topic Summary section.

Most Attractive Aspects of Northern Living



Community leaders who responded to the survey were asked to list what aspect or aspects of living in the north they like the most. The purpose of this question was to identify what respondents perceive as being important to the quality-of-life. Survey responses fell into the following categories:

- friendly, generous and hard working people (42%)
- natural beauty and wilderness of the region (39%)
- healthy and peaceful environment (35%)
- rural, relaxed lifestyle (26%)
- close bond and community spirit (17%)
- climate and the recreational opportunities it affords (12%).

In general, the "likes" of the respondents were related to the positive social and physical environment they believe exists the north.

Least Attractive Aspects of Northern Living

Survey respondents expressed the following dislikes about living in northern Alberta:

- The communities are too far from major cities and the services they provide (39%).
- The cost-of-living is high (30%).
- Remote areas experience difficulties in attracting health services professionals (20%).
- The winter climate is harsh (17%).
- The availability or selection of consumer goods and services is poor (15%).
- There is a lack of recreation and entertainment facilities (8%).

By far, the majority of "dislikes" were associated with either the cost or availability of local goods and services.

Development Priorities

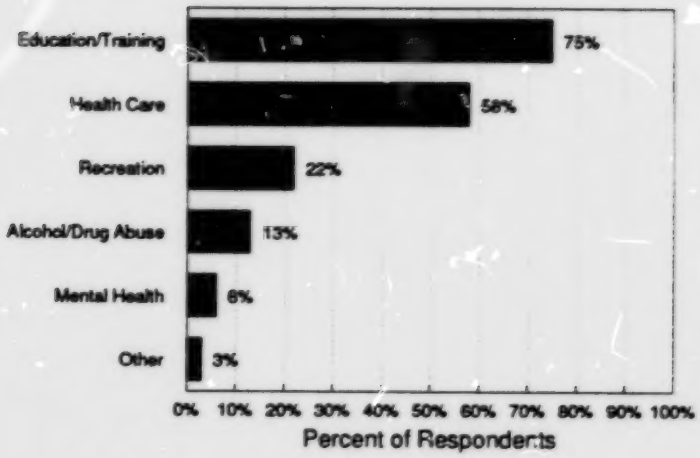
The foregoing sections provide insight to those factors that enhance or detract from the quality-of-life in the north. They therefore provide a useful context for reviewing the priorities of respondents in human services, economic development and the environment. Collectively, these three areas encompass the majority of development issues. The priorities of respondents under each category are discussed below. It should be emphasized that respondents were asked to list only their *two* top priorities under each category. As such, the information provided through the survey is not a comprehensive list of their development priorities.

Human Services Priorities

Figure 4 shows the human services priorities of survey respondents. In general, the priorities listed by respondents encompass the same topic areas as the most frequently heard human services briefs. Education and training, recreation, and health care continue to be dominant areas of concern.

An interesting aspect in human services is the emergence of alcohol and drug abuse, and mental health as high priority areas. Together, these two topic areas represented fewer than 5% of the human services briefs received by Council during the 1980s. In contrast, 19% of survey respondents identified alcohol and drug abuse and mental health as a high priority.

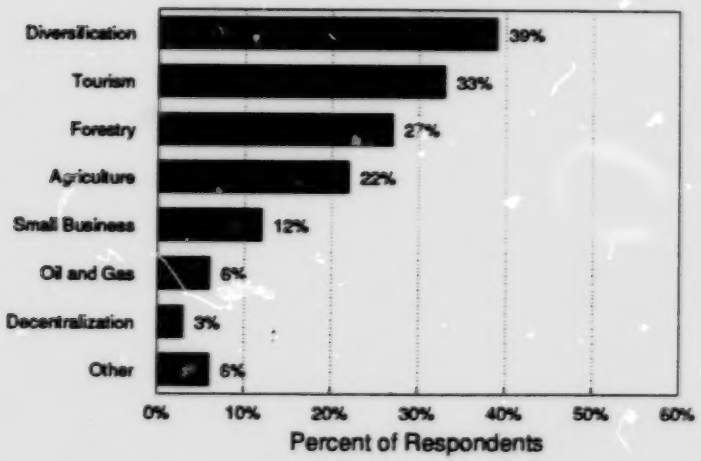
Figure 4
Human Services Priorities



Economic Development Priorities

Figure 5 gives a breakdown of the priorities of survey respondents in the field of economic development. Although similar to the findings from the analysis of NADC briefs, the survey results enhance our understanding of the underlying development issues facing the north. For example, survey respondents most frequently stated that diversification was the top priority of their community or region. Within this context, the desire by communities to proceed with tourism and forestry development is indicative of the general need to expand the economic base of the region.

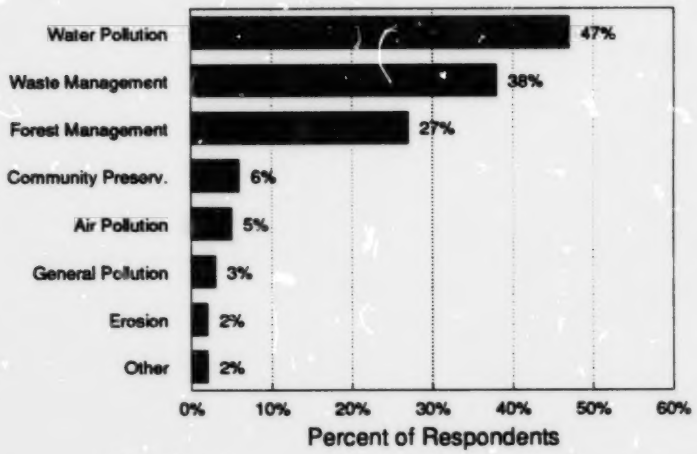
Figure 5
Economic Development Priorities



Environment Priorities

Figure 6 shows a breakdown of the most frequently stated environmental priorities of survey respondents. Consistent with environment briefs presented during the 1980s, issues related to water pollution and waste management dominated respondent concerns. A significant number of respondents also expressed concern about issues related to forest management.

Figure 6
Environment Priorities



Perceived Needs and Consequences

In addition to listing their top two priorities in the three development categories, respondents were also asked to provide a rationale for their selection. In some cases, respondents explained how they arrived at their choice by identifying a particular need in the north (e.g., lack of programs or financing). In others, community leaders referred to the possible consequences if positive action were taken to address the issue.

Table 1 shows a summary of some common needs and possible consequences of positive action for each of the three development categories. In general, the perceived needs encompass many of the same areas as the "dislikes" related to northern living. Similarly, the consequences of positive action enhance or maintain those aspects of northern living that respondents like the most.

In terms of human services, the need to attract and retain qualified professionals was a frequently stated concern for both health care and education and training. The need to improve facilities was common to all topic areas, although most prevalent in the case of recreation.

Under economic development, the need to diversify the local or regional economy permeated practically all survey responses. Diversification, either through development of tourism, forestry, small business or other industries, is viewed as important for stabilizing the northern economy and retaining young people in the region.

Needs related to the environment were similar for each environmental priority. Respondents cited preservation or protection of natural areas and ecosystems as a critical aspect of northern development. Positive action on environmental issues was viewed as essential for present and future generations.

Table 1
Common Development Needs and Consequences

Category	Recurring Need	Consequences of Positive Action
Human Services	• improved facilities, programs or services • qualified professionals	• improve quality-of-life
Economic Development	• diversify the northern economy • increase employment opportunities	• capitalize on the high potential of the region • strengthen the stability of the region • increase self-sufficiency at the local level
Environment	• preserve and protect natural areas and ecosystems	• retain young people in the region • maintain positive aspects of northern living • preserve the integrity of the environment for future generations

Recommended Actions

Along with describing reasons for their selection, survey respondents were asked to suggest methods for achieving or addressing their development priorities. The results from this question cannot be interpreted as a definitive list of actions to address the development needs of the north. However, they are useful for identifying some perceived constraints that must be overcome in dealing with northern concerns.

Table 2 provides a summary of the most frequently stated required actions under each category. In the case of human services, most respondents recommended increased funding for programs and facilities as the principal means for addressing their communities' human services needs. Financial incentives to attract and retain professionals was often recommended, particularly in health care and education.

In economic development, most respondents viewed increased efforts by government to promote or support development, including the use of incentives, as the major way to proceed. Respondents also recognized the important role of the private sector in identifying and responding to development opportunities.

Under the environment category, respondents generally viewed strict government controls and monitoring, together with use of improved industrial technologies, as the principal avenue for addressing their concerns. They also identified increased community involvement, particularly in forest management, as an appropriate approach for incorporating local concerns into environmental decision-making.

Table 2
Recommended Actions Needed to Address Development Concerns or Priorities

Category	Recommended Actions
Human Services	• Increase funding for programs and/or facilities. • Provide incentives to attract qualified professionals.
Economic Development	• Provide incentives to expand value-added industries in the north. • Continue to develop the tourism and forestry industries. • Increase or expand local development programs.
Environment	• Ensure strict levels of government control. • Develop and use improved industrial technologies. • Develop forest management plans in concert with community and industry. • Increase public awareness of environmental issues.

Confidence in the Future

The Northern Perspectives Survey also asked respondents to state the likelihood that their chosen priority or concern would be successfully dealt with within the next five years. This question hoped to gauge the general level of confidence of community leaders about the future of the north. Survey responses for each development category have been grouped under three sub-headings:

Optimistic:

- Success over the next five years is either likely or highly likely.

Somewhat Optimistic

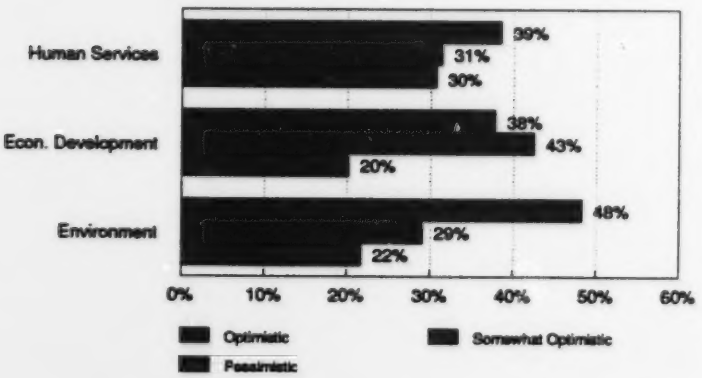
- Success over the next five years is possible.

Pessimistic

- Success over the next five years is either unlikely or highly unlikely.

Figure 7 shows the overall confidence levels of survey respondents under each development category. Confidence levels separated by topic area are shown under Topic Summaries.

Figure 7
Confidence that Priorities will be Addressed within Next Five Years



Likely and highly likely (optimistic) responses were recorded with almost equal frequency under both the human services and economic development categories. However, a greater number of unlikely and highly unlikely (pessimistic) responses were recorded for human services. In general, survey respondents were least optimistic about their human services needs being addressed within the next five years.

Survey respondents were most optimistic in the area of the environment. Nearly half believed that progress on their stated environmental concern is either likely or highly likely within the next five years. Only 22% of respondents stated that progress is unlikely or highly unlikely.

While the results shown in Figure 7 provide a general sense of the confidence levels of respondents, they mask important differences for individual topic areas. For example, within the human services category there is a relatively high degree of confidence that progress will be made in the areas of education and training and alcohol and drug abuse. The primary reason cited for optimism is that communities and government are committed to working toward solutions. At the same time, respondents are less confident about their communities' recreation needs being addressed within the next five years. They cited concerns over budgetary problems related to the cost and operation of recreation facilities as hampering progress in this area. In fact, concern over funding was the most frequently stated reason for low confidence under the human services category.

In economic development, survey respondents were most optimistic about the future of tourism, forestry and small business. They cited the high potential of the region as the primary reason for their confidence. In the case of forestry, their optimism was tempered by concerns related to environmental issues associated with forest development.

The lowest confidence level observed in the entire survey was for agriculture. Sixty-three percent of respondents who mentioned agriculture believed that progress on agricultural issues within the next five years is either unlikely or highly unlikely. Most cited the poor state of world agriculture markets as the primary reason for their pessimism.

As indicated above, survey respondents were most optimistic about their environmental concerns being addressed within the next five years. The highest level of confidence was recorded for waste management. No one who identified waste management as a priority believed that progress in this area is either unlikely or highly unlikely. Over half thought that progress is either likely or highly likely while the remainder believed that progress is possible. The high level of public awareness of environmental issues was the most frequently cited reason for optimism under the environment category.

Northern Alberta into the '90s

Balanced Northern Development

It is evident from answers of community leaders in the Northern Perspectives Survey that they believe northern development should proceed in a manner that:

- preserves the lifestyle of northern communities
- maintains traditional economic sectors while supporting new industries
- provides for an adequate level of human services
- ensures the long-term integrity of the environment.

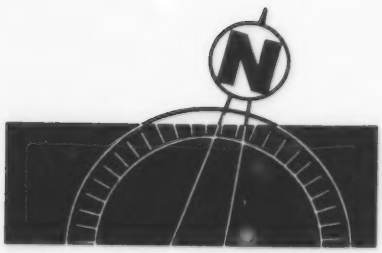
Collectively, these values help to define the attitudes of survey respondents on how they want the north to develop in the 1990s.

By their very nature, many of the above objectives are in conflict with one another. For example, development of new industries, such as tourism or forestry, may adversely affect the lifestyles of northern residents. Similarly, large industrial projects may have a negative impact on the northern environment.

It is clear that for northerners to achieve their development objectives, they must carefully balance their interests in a variety of areas. The weight that each individual places on the above objectives will determine whether progress is being made in this area. This implies that there is no single view of development which can be generalized for all northerners.

Because of the potential diversity of opinions on northern development, the Northern Perspectives Survey also asked respondents to provide their own definition of what balanced development means in the 1990s. The majority of survey responses fell into the following categories:

- Development must occur in full consideration of the needs and directions of northern communities.
- Development must proceed in full consultation with the communities which it most affects.
- Development should proceed in an environmentally sensitive way. In this case, environment is broadly defined to include the physical as well as the social environment.
- Strategic plans must be developed that incorporate all aspects of development including social, economic and environmental needs.
- Development must proceed using both primary and secondary resources of the region.



It is significant that three of the above categories define balanced development as a process rather than an outcome. Survey respondents placed a great deal of emphasis on a consultative approach to development. While it is clear community leaders had strong opinions about the direction northern development should take, they qualified this opinion with the need to involve individuals and communities in the development process. This implies that balanced northern development is an ongoing process of reconciling the diverse interests of individuals, communities, government and industry.

Summary and Conclusions

This report has analysed northern opinion over the past 10 years through briefs presented to the NADC. This information was supplemented with a "snapshot" of current opinion collected through the Northern Perspectives Survey. The combination of development issues from the 1980s as well as today's priorities and concerns presents us with some clear challenges for the upcoming decade.

Challenges in Human Services

Much effort has been exerted in recent years to resolve human services problems. Yet community leaders indicate that considerable work is still needed to:

- attract and retain professionals
- improve the quality and quantity of human service programs and facilities
- address problems associated with funding.

Challenges in Economic Development

In the past, northern Albertans have demonstrated a strong commitment to economic development as a means of strengthening their communities and improving the quality-of-life. For the most part, community leaders are confident that their economic development priorities can be achieved. However, they express a desire to see development proceed in a manner that:

- is compatible and supportive of northern lifestyles
- provides opportunities for young people and the unemployed
- contributes to the diversification of the northern economy
- maintains the integrity of the physical environment.

Challenges in Environmental Management

Respondents to the Northern Perspectives Survey cited a healthy environment as one of the key factors that makes living in the north enjoyable. While they generally support continued development of the region's resources, they are concerned about the need to:

- preserve the long-term integrity of the northern environment
- guide the nature and pace of large industrial projects from the standpoint of environmental sustainability.

Topic Summaries

Introduction

This section contains summaries of results from analysis of NADC briefs and the Northern Perspectives Survey for 12 different topic areas. The section is organized according to (1) human services, (2) economic development and (3) the environment. Topic summaries are provided for only those topic areas which were cited as priorities by more than 10% of survey respondents. Within each category, topic summaries are arranged in decreasing order of frequency starting with the most often cited priority.

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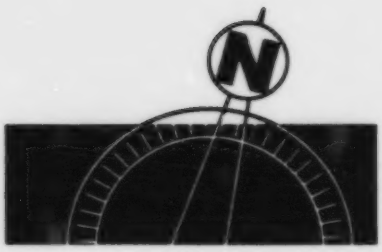
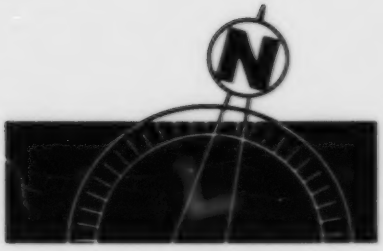


Human Services

- **Education and Training**
- **Health Care**
- **Recreation and Culture**
- **Alcohol and Drug Abuse**

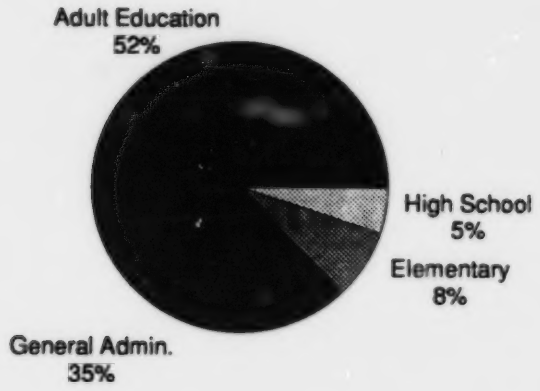


Education and Training

Analysis of NADC Briefs

A total of 194 briefs were presented to the NADC during the 1980s dealing with issues related to education and training. This represents 27% of human services briefs received by Council. As the following chart shows, the majority of these dealt with adult education and training issues. Concerns over general administration, financing and delivery of education and training programs and services represent the second most frequently heard education and training brief.

Education and Training Briefs by Topic Area (1980-1989)



Total Briefs = 191

The following list shows the top five areas of concern as reflected in the education and training briefs:

- development and/or delivery of adult education and training programs including post-secondary, vocational and literacy training (35%)
- financing of facilities and programs (32%)
- education and training in native communities (28%)
- development and/or delivery of programs for school-age children (24%)
- recruitment and retention of professional personnel (6%).

Northern Perspectives Survey

Sixty-two percent of respondents to the Northern Perspectives Survey cited improvements in the area of education and training as a community priority. Reasons cited include:

- It would encourage young people to remain in the region.
- It would improve the quality of life for northern residents.
- There is a lack of proper facilities.
- There is a need for improved access to high quality education and training programs in some instances.

- It would provide residents with the ability to take advantage of local employment opportunities.

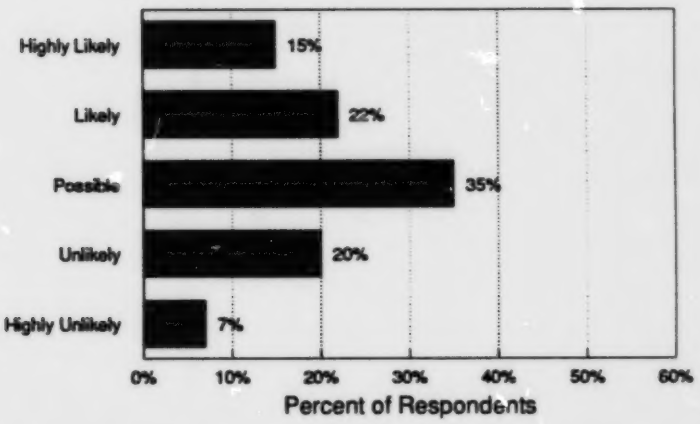
Respondents suggested the following for addressing the education and training needs of their community or region:

- better public awareness of the importance of education and training in the north
- higher levels of funding for facilities, staff and programs
- better training of staff including cross-cultural training
- incentives to attract and retain high quality educators.

Confidence in Future

Thirty-seven percent of respondents who cited education and training as a priority believed that improvements in education and training are either likely or highly likely within the next five years. Another 35% believed that some progress is possible.

Confidence that Education and Training Issues will be Addressed within the Next Five Years



Reasons cited for optimism include:

- Education and training needs are currently being addressed by government and community.
- The need for improvements in education and training programs has been identified by government, industry and community.

The 30% of education and training respondents who believed it unlikely or highly unlikely that their communities' needs would be addressed identified the following reasons:

- There is a need for better coordination of efforts to address education and training issues.
- Funding limitations will hamper progress.

Health Care

Analysis of NADC Briefs

A total of 180 briefs were presented to the NADC during the 1980s dealing with health care issues. This represents 25% of the human services briefs received by Council. Fully 86% of these briefs dealt with the delivery of medical services in the north (e.g., hospitals, physician care). The remainder (14%) pertained to public health.

The following list shows the top five areas of concern as reflected in the health care briefs:

- development and/or maintenance of health care facilities (41%)
- recruitment and retention of health care professionals (37%)
- financing of health care facilities and programs (14%)
- health services for seniors (14%)
- health services for native communities (12%).

Northern Perspectives Survey

Fully 58% of those who responded to the survey indicated that improvement in health care is a priority in their community or region. Reasons cited include:

- There is a shortage of health care professionals in the area.
- Many services are either inadequate or unavailable.
- Better facilities are required in some centres.
- Health care improvements would enhance the quality-of-life of local residents.

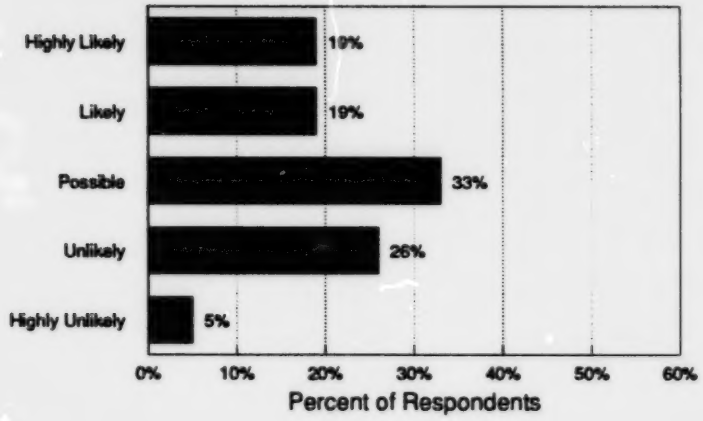
Respondents suggested the following means for addressing the health care needs of their community or region:

- increased funding for health services
- incentives to attract health professionals to the north.

Confidence in Future

Health care respondents indicated a reasonable level of confidence that their health care priorities would be successfully addressed within the next five years. Thirty-eight percent believed that progress is either likely or highly likely while another 33% believed that progress is possible.

Confidence that Health Care Issues will be Addressed within the Next Five Years



Two principal reasons were cited for the possible to highly likely confidence levels:

- Solutions are already in progress.
- Government and community are currently assessing needs and developing appropriate solutions.

The 31% of health care respondents who believed that progress on health care issues is either unlikely or highly unlikely stated the following reasons:

- Funding limitations will hamper progress.
- Health care priorities will require reorganization.

Recreation and Culture

Analysis of NADC Briefs

A total of 151 briefs were received by the NADC during the 1980s dealing with issues related to recreation and culture. This represents 21% of the human services briefs received by Council. Half (51%) of the cited improvements in the area of recreation and culture were viewed as benefiting the tourism industry.

The majority of recreation and culture briefs dealt with the following issues or concerns:

- financing for recreation or cultural projects, including grants (46%)
- development of recreational facilities such as parks, marinas, swimming pools, rinks, golf courses and libraries (44%)
- development of cultural programs or facilities (30%)
- development of recreational services in native communities (7%).

Northern Perspectives Survey

Twenty-two percent of respondents to the Survey identified improved recreational opportunities as a priority for their community or region. It should be noted that unlike NADC briefs which dealt with topics ranging from commercial recreation to cultural events, survey respondents were primarily concerned with local recreation programs and services (e.g., swimming pools, ball parks, curling rinks, hockey arenas).

Those respondents who cited improvements in recreation as a community priority identified the following reasons for their choice:

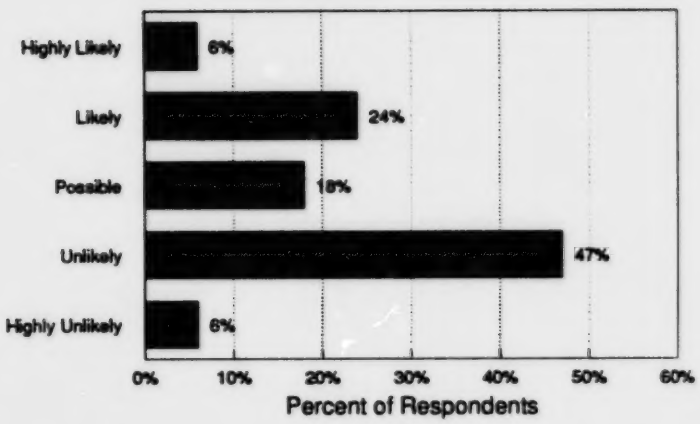
- Recreational facilities are either inadequate or unavailable in the immediate area.
- Recreational facilities are too expensive to access.
- Improvements in recreation would enhance the quality-of-life of local residents.

In general, respondents identified increased funding as the principal means for addressing the recreation needs of their community.

Confidence in Future

Less than half (47%) of the survey respondents who identified recreation as a priority are optimistic that their community's recreational needs will be addressed within the next five years. The majority (53%) believe that improvements in the area of recreation is either unlikely or highly unlikely.

Confidence that Recreation Issues will be Addressed within the Next Five Years



Reasons stated for the possible to highly likely confidence levels are as follows:

- Improvements in recreational services have become a community priority.
- People are committed to the achievement of better facilities and programming.

The 53% of recreation respondents who were less optimistic about their communities' needs being addressed within the next five years identified the following reasons:

- Budgetary problems related to development, maintenance and programming of recreational facilities will hamper progress.
- Improved recreational services have been an issue in the community for a long time and have not been addressed.

Alcohol and Drug Abuse

Analysis of NADC Briefs

The NADC received 27 briefs during the 1980s dealing with alcohol and drug abuse. All seven of the briefs related to drug abuse were received after 1985.

The majority of alcohol and drug abuse briefs dealt with the following issues or concerns:

- development and/or maintenance of facilities for treating and counselling alcoholics and addicts (41%)
- development or support for alcohol and drug abuse programs (37%)
- alcohol and drug abuse in native communities (30%)
- financing of programs and facilities (22%)
- personnel for treatment and counselling (22%).

Northern Perspectives Survey

Thirteen percent of those responding to the survey stated that the treatment of alcohol and drug abuse was a priority in their community. They identified the following reasons for their selection:

- Alcohol and drug abuse programs are either inadequate or unavailable.
- Increased access to family counselling is required.
- There is a shortage of qualified professionals.
- Alcohol and drug abuse problems must be addressed before they reach a crisis point.

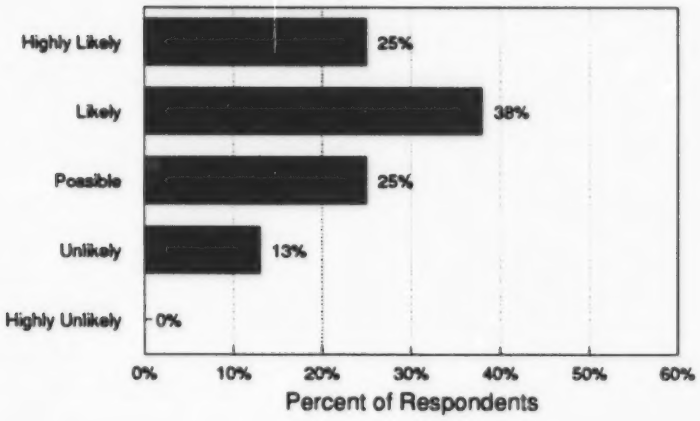
Respondents suggested the following means for addressing problems related to alcohol and drug abuse:

- More specialized facilities and programs must be developed.
- Present programs must be re-evaluated in terms of their effectiveness.
- Higher levels of funding for programs, staff and facilities are required.

Confidence in Future

In general, respondents who identified alcohol and drug abuse as a priority were optimistic that their community needs would be addressed within the next five years. Sixty-three percent believed that progress is either likely or highly likely. Another 25% thought that progress is possible.

Confidence that Alcohol and Drug Abuse Issues will be Addressed within the Next Five Years



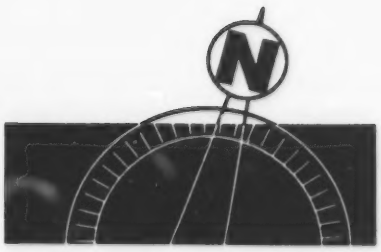
Reasons cited for optimism include:

- The need has been identified by both the community and government.
- Approaches for addressing alcohol and drug abuse problems are being developed and implemented.

Of the 13% who thought progress in the area of alcohol and drug abuse is unlikely, most believed that the agencies responsible for addressing alcohol and drug abuse issues were not taking an appropriate approach to the problem.

Economic Development

- **Diversification**
- **Tourism**
- **Forestry**
- **Agriculture**
- **Small Business**



Diversification

Analysis of NADC Briefs

Diversification of the northern economy is implicit in many of the economic development briefs received by the NADC. Briefs expressing support for development of new industries such as tourism and forestry accounted for 34% of the economic development briefs received by the NADC during the 1980s. In many instances, brief presenters specifically cited diversification as an important goal. When combined with briefs dealing with research into the feasibility of new industries or activities, the total number of diversification briefs increases to 43%.

Northern Perspectives Survey

Fully 39% of respondents to the survey stated that diversification of the local economy is a community priority. They cited the following reasons for their opinion:

- There is a need to derive greater value from the region's resources.
- Diversification is essential for job creation and a stable economy.
- Diversification will increase the self-sufficiency of the north.

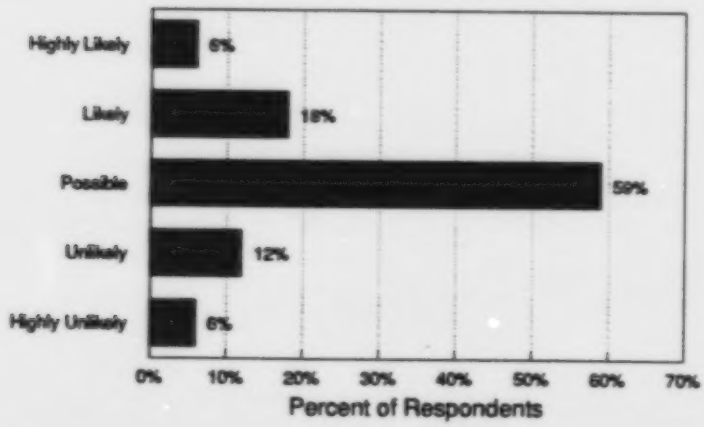
Given the perceived importance of diversification, respondents cited the following methods for how it could be achieved:

- Increase efforts to identify and promote new development opportunities, including secondary processing.
- Implement or strengthen local development programs.

Confidence in the Future

The majority (59%) of respondents who cited diversification as a community priority believed that increased diversification is possible within the next five years. Another 24% felt that diversification is either likely or highly likely.

Confidence that Diversification Objectives will be Achieved within the Next Five Years



Some reasons cited for optimism include:

- The potential for increased diversification exists within the region.
- Government is already working to promote diversification.
- The private sector will recognize and respond to development opportunities.

Those respondents who believed that increased diversification is either unlikely or highly unlikely did not provide specific reasons for their opinion.

Tourism

Analysis of NADC Briefs

A total of 149 briefs were presented to the NADC during the 1980s dealing with tourism development. This represents 27% of the economic development briefs received by Council. The increasing interest shown in tourism is evident by the fact that 62% of tourism briefs were received during the latter half of the decade.

The following list shows the most frequent areas of concern as reflected in the tourism briefs:

- support for the development of tourism facilities or attractions, including marinas, golf courses, historical sites, museums, parks, campgrounds, ski hills and information centres (54%)
- concerns over the financing of new or existing tourism projects, programs or promotional activities (36%)
- support for initiatives or activities that promote tourism, including marketing, planning, industry workshops, events and training programs (27%)
- requests for research into the feasibility of new projects or activities (9%).

Northern Perspectives Survey

Thirty-three percent of survey respondents identified tourism development as a priority for their community. Reasons cited for selecting tourism as a priority include:

- Wilderness areas in the north are attractive to visitors.
- The north has a rich history in which visitors are interested.
- Business travel is increasing.

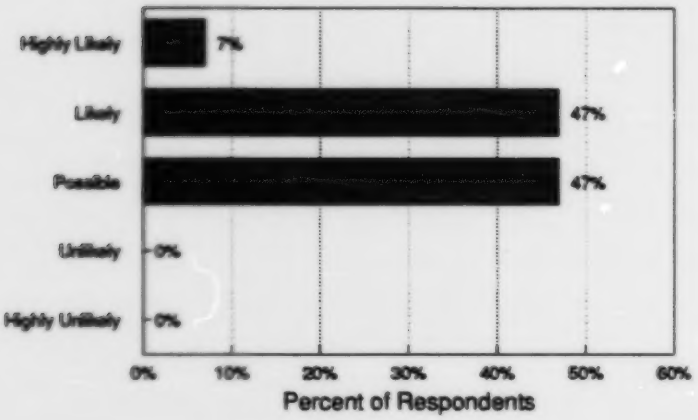
Community leaders suggested the following means by which tourism could be expanded in their area:

- a higher level of promotion
- increased involvement of the private sector in tourism development
- active support of the public sector to achieve the industry's full potential.

Confidence in Future

Survey respondents expressed a relatively high degree of confidence in the future of the tourism industry. Fifty-four percent of those surveyed believed that it is likely or highly likely that their tourism development objectives will be achieved within the next five years. Another 47% believed that it is possible that the northern tourism industry would expand over this same period. None felt that progress is either unlikely or highly unlikely.

Confidence that Tourism Development Objectives will be Achieved within the Next Five Years



Reasons cited for this high level of optimism include:

- There is a great potential for tourism development in the region.
- The public is pressuring for tourism development.
- Senior government policy is consistent with expansion of the northern tourism industry.

Forestry

Analysis of NADC Briefs

A total of 44 briefs were presented to the NADC during the 1980s dealing with development of the forest industry. This represents 8% of the economic development briefs received by Council. Sixty percent of these were received within the last five years.

The following list shows the most frequent areas of concern as reflected in the forestry briefs:

- support for the development of the forest industry including establishment of tree nurseries (59%)
- concerns related to forest development in native communities including employment programs, project financing and forest land-use (34%)
- concerns related to timber allocation (12%).

Northern Perspectives Survey

Forestry was the third most frequently cited economic development priority of survey respondents. Fully 27% of those surveyed believed that development of the forest industry was important to the local economy. Reasons cited included:

- It would assist in the diversification of the economy.
- It effectively uses a renewable resource.
- It would create long-term employment.

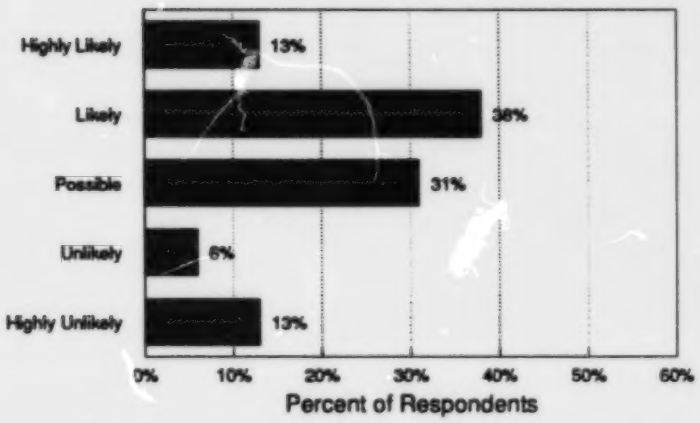
Survey respondents suggested the following means for achieving their forest development objectives:

- active support of forest development by senior government
- development of strategies to effectively balance forest development with environmental issues
- increased efforts to establish secondary plants for processing of raw forestry materials in northern Alberta.

Confidence in the Future

Fifty-one percent of survey respondents who cited forestry as a development priority believed that forest development is either likely or highly likely within the next five years. Another 31% believed that development is possible while only 18% felt that expansion is unlikely or highly unlikely.

Confidence that Forest Development Objectives will be Achieved within the Next Five Years



Reasons cited include:

- Senior government is supportive of expansion of the forest industry in the north.
- Forest development is essential to the long-term economic stability of the north.
- The opportunity is evident.

Those who were less optimistic about their forest development objectives being achieved cited the following reasons:

- Environmental concerns will hamper or limit forest development.
- There is a lack of local control over development decisions.

Agriculture

Analysis of NADC Briefs

A total of 127 briefs were received by the NADC during the 1980s dealing with the agriculture industry. This represents 23% of the number of economic development briefs received by Council.

The following list shows the top five areas of concern as reflected in the agriculture briefs:

- development and/or management of agricultural lands (45%)
- financing of farms or agricultural activities including crop insurance (41%)
- research into the feasibility of new crops or agricultural activities (20%)
- native agriculture (11%)
- grain transportation costs and facilities (11%).

Northern Perspectives Survey

Twenty-four percent of survey respondents stated that development or support of the agriculture industry is a priority for their community. Reasons cited include:

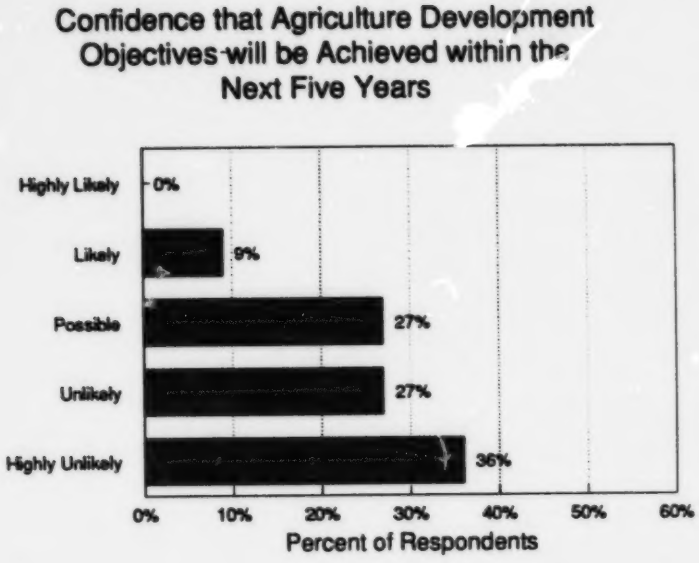
- It is essential for maintaining the family farm and retaining young people in the region.
- It would attract new people to the region.
- It is necessary for the survival of the community.

Respondents suggested the following means for achieving their agriculture development objectives:

- Improve or expand government programs for assisting producers in managing their farms.
- Develop improved methods for stabilizing farm incomes.

Confidence in the Future

Survey respondents were generally not optimistic about the future of the agriculture industry. Fully 63% believed that it is unlikely or highly unlikely that the needs of the agriculture industry will be addressed within the next five years. Another 27% believed that progress is possible while only 9% felt that it is likely.



Survey respondents cited the following reasons for their lack of optimism:

- Solutions will take time because of world agricultural markets.
- Decisions relating to agriculture are made outside the region.

No specific reasons were provided for why some respondents believed that progress on agricultural issues is possible or likely.

Small Business

Analysis of NADC Briefs

The NADC does not generally receive briefs exclusively related to the needs or concerns of small business. However, support for small business is implicit in many economic development briefs received by Council. These fall into two categories:

- briefs supporting the development or enhancement of small businesses capable of assisting in diversifying the northern economy (e.g., small-scale manufacturing, tourism)
- briefs supporting the development or enhancement of service sector businesses capable of capturing some of the spin-off benefits from economic development, including both retail trade as well as services to northern industries.

Northern Perspectives Survey

Twelve percent of those responding to the survey identified development or expansion of small business as a community priority. Reasons cited include:

- It would enhance the local economy and stabilize employment.
- It would increase local self-sufficiency.
- It would increase access to consumer goods.

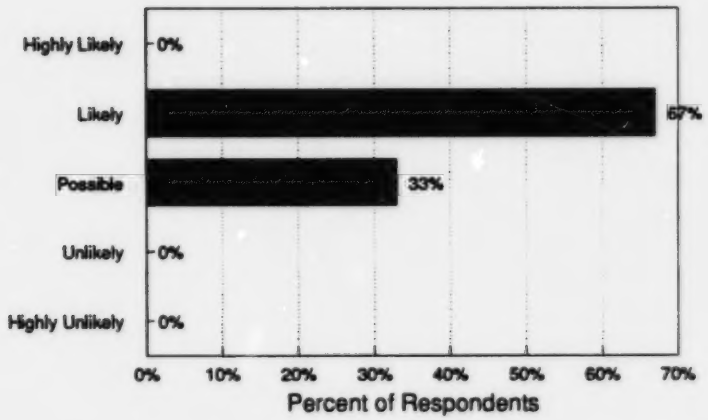
Those who identified small business development as a priority cited the following means by which their development objectives could be achieved:

- development or expansion of small business support programs, particularly at the local level
- establishment of major plants which can be serviced by small business.

Confidence in the Future

The majority (67%) of those who identified small business as a community priority believed that progress in this area is likely within the next five years. Another 33% thought that progress is possible. None believed that small business development is either unlikely or highly unlikely.

Confidence that Small Business Development Objectives will be Achieved within the Next Five Years

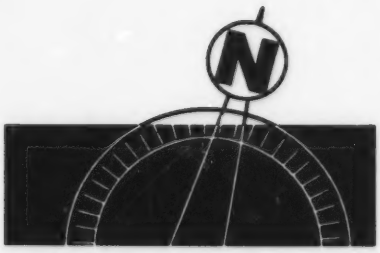


The reasons for optimism include:

- It is essential for the long term stability of the local economy.
- The potential for increased small business activity is available.
- Northern business people have shown that they are capable of working together to take advantage of development opportunities.

Environment

- **Water Management and Pollution**
- **Waste Management**
- **Forest Management**



Water Management and Pollution

Analysis of NADC Briefs

Sixty briefs were presented to NADC during the 1980s on issues related to water management and pollution. This represents 57% of environment briefs presented to Council. These briefs dealt with the following topic areas:

- water quality and pollution (45%)
- drainage and erosion (43%)
- water diversion (12%).

Northern Perspectives Survey

Forty-seven percent of survey respondents identified the maintenance of water quality as one of the two most important environmental challenges facing their community or region. It should be noted that unlike NADC briefs which dealt with a variety of water related topics, survey respondents were primarily concerned with water pollution. Reasons cited include:

- concern over the long-term welfare of communities and future generations
- concern over effluent from industries located near rivers.

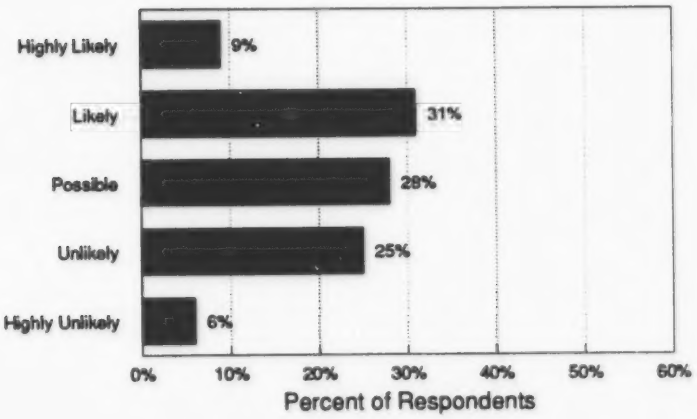
Survey respondents had the following suggestions on how their water pollution concerns could be addressed:

- stricter levels of government control, regulations and monitoring
- adoption of improved industrial technology
- increased public awareness.

Confidence in Future

Forty percent of respondents believed that progress in addressing their water pollution concerns is either likely or highly likely within the next five years. Another 28% felt that some progress is possible.

Confidence that Water Management Issues will be Addressed within the Next Five Years



Some of the reasons cited for optimism include:

- Public pressure will necessitate action on the part of government and industry.
- Action on this issue is essential for the future.
- Government is already addressing the issues.

The 31% of respondents who believed progress in the area of water pollution is either unlikely or highly unlikely gave the following reasons:

- Industry appears to be reluctant to adopt new technologies.
- Government seems to be unable to properly enforce regulations.

Waste Management

Analysis of NADC Briefs

The topic of waste management includes both waste disposal and waste reduction strategies such as recycling. During the 1980s, the NADC received 11 briefs dealing with waste management issues. Seven of these were related to the treatment and disposal of hazardous waste. Only a single brief was received dealing with recycling.

Northern Perspectives Survey

Thirty-eight percent of survey respondents identified waste management as a community priority. Reasons cited include:

- lack of appropriate landfill sites
- concern over chemical pollution from landfill sites
- lack of an overall waste reduction strategy.

Survey respondents suggested the following means for dealing with their waste management concerns:

- Continue the examination and implementation of new technologies to deal with solid wastes.
- Increase public awareness of waste management issues.
- Develop firm policies and strict government legislation to address waste management problems.
- Initiate effective recycling programs.

Confidence in the Future

Survey respondents who cited waste management as a priority were generally optimistic that their waste management concerns would be addressed within the next five years. Fully 68% believed that progress on waste management issues is either likely or highly likely within the next five years. The remainder believed that progress is possible. No respondent stated that progress is unlikely or highly unlikely.

Reasons for this high degree of optimism include:

- Public awareness will ensure that waste management issues are addressed.
- Future generations are dependent on effective waste management strategies.

Forest Management

Analysis of NADC Briefs

The NADC received 29 briefs during the 1980s dealing with the issue of forest management. The majority (72%) dealt with issues related to forest planning and the impact of competing land uses on northern forests. The remainder (28%) were concerned with the protection and preservation of wildlife and wildlife habitat.

Northern Perspectives Survey

Twenty-seven percent of survey respondents identified concerns related to forest management as an important challenge facing their community or region. They cited the following reasons for their selection:

- They felt concern over the destruction of natural areas.
- Proper forest management is essential for future generations.
- Poor forest management could have a negative effect on the tourism industry.

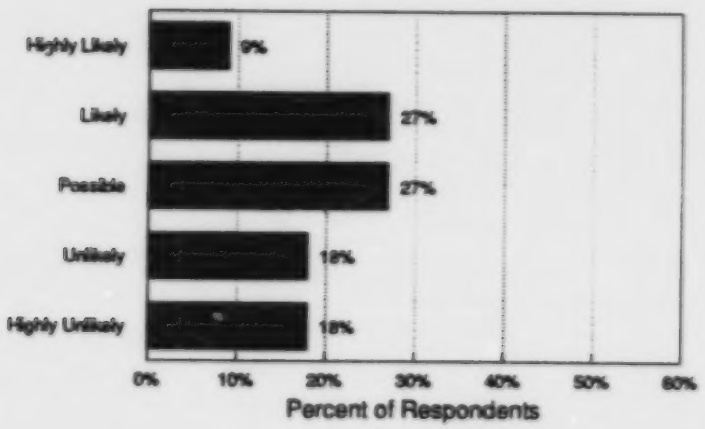
Respondents identified the following ways for addressing their forest management concerns:

- stricter levels of government control, regulation and monitoring
- increased community involvement in forest management decisions
- public education programs to promote sound forest management.

Confidence in the Future

Twenty-seven percent of survey respondents who identified concerns over forest management as a priority believed that progress is possible within the next five years. Another 36% felt that progress is either likely or highly likely.

Confidence that Forest Management Issues will be Addressed within the Next Five Years



The primary reason stated by respondents for optimism was the high level of public awareness re the importance of effective forest management.

The 36% of survey respondents who believed that progress on forest management issues is unlikely or highly unlikely provided the following reasons for their opinion:

- There appears to be a reluctance to adopt new management practices or strategies.
- Funding limitations will hamper effective forest management.

Northern Perspectives Survey

Preamble

The Northern Alberta Development Council plans to conduct a major conference on northern development in Grande Prairie on November 21-23, 1990. The first portion of this conference will be dedicated to a discussion of the development challenges and opportunities facing northern Alberta in the 1990s. A pre-conference report is being developed to facilitate this discussion.

This survey is designed to gain opinions from northern leaders on what they see as the important development priorities facing northern Alberta. Please provide us with your PERSONAL opinion(s) for each of the survey questions. If you require more space, feel free to use the extra page provided at the back of the questionnaire. After a review of the survey results, some telephone interviews may be conducted to further explore issues and concerns. Should we call you, we would very much appreciate your participation.

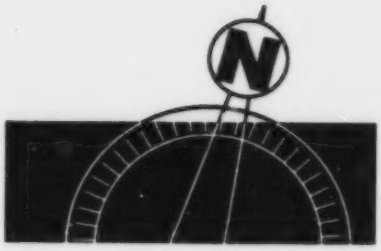
Although the pre-conference report will be a public document, all individual responses will be treated as CONFIDENTIAL.

Living

1. What aspect or aspects of living in northern Alberta do you like the most?
2. What aspect or aspects of living in northern Alberta do you like the least?

Northern Human Services

3. What do you personally feel are the TWO most important human services priorities in your community or region? (Possible examples of human services priorities include education, health care, recreation, employment training, alcohol and drug abuse treatment and counselling, etc.) Please briefly explain why you chose each of your priorities.
4. What do you believe needs to be done to address the human services priorities listed in Question 3?
5. Overall, what do you believe is the likelihood that the human services priorities listed in Question 3 will be successfully addressed within the next five years?



Northern Economic Development

6. What do you personally feel are the TWO most important economic development priorities for your community or region? Please briefly explain why you chose each of your priorities.
7. What do you believe needs to be done to achieve the economic development priorities listed in Question 6?

8. Overall, what do you believe is the likelihood that economic development priorities listed in Question 6 will be successfully achieved within the next five years. Please check one of the following:

☐ highly likely ☐ unlikely
☐ likely ☐ highly unlikely
☐ possible

Please explain why you feel this way.

The Environment

9. What do you personally believe are the TWO most important environmental challenges facing your community or region? Please briefly explain why you chose each of your priorities.
10. What do you believe needs to be done to meet the environmental challenges listed in Question 9?
11. Overall, what do you feel is the likelihood that the environmental challenges listed in Question 9 will be successfully addressed within the next five years? Please check one of the following:

☐ highly likely ☐ unlikely
☐ likely ☐ highly unlikely
☐ possible

Please explain why you feel this way.

Balanced Northern Development

12. Please provide us with a few ideas on how you would define "balanced northern development" in the 1990s.